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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 5 October 2005, at 11.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Wali ..... (Nigeria)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.35 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) said that, although five years had passed since the international community had adopted the global objective of strengthening the partnership between North and South with a view to ensuring sustainable development, economic disparities had continued to grow and the situation had been made worse by globalization. Nevertheless, the recent World Summit gave cause for hope. With regard to financing for development, the Summit Outcome had affirmed the relevance and legitimacy of the Millennium Development Goals, and reiterated the goal that the developed countries should provide official development assistance equivalent to 0.7 per cent of their GNP, as well as setting out a precise timetable for that to be done. That commitment, which was to be applauded, now remained to be carried out. The Summit's consensus on debt cancellation and the allocation of grants to finance poverty elimination measures was also welcomed, and initiatives in that connection needed to be strengthened.

2. With respect to Africa, the Summit had made major commitments aimed at strengthening the New Partnership for Africa's Development. As for rural and agricultural development, the fact that the Summit had agreed to increase agricultural development aid and build up developing countries' capacity in the area of trade in agricultural products showed that the issue of hunger and food self-sufficiency was not a national responsibility alone, and that the international community needed to be involved as well. Other items agreed upon at the Summit, which the Second Committee should examine, were full employment, rights of migrants and the excessive cost of remittances made by expatriate workers to their home countries. It was hoped that the high-level dialogue on international migration and development to be held in 2006 would take into account the agreement in principle reached at the Summit.

3. Fighting poverty required examining the relationship between development and the environment. The rapid depletion of the ozone layer, the extinction of plant and animal species, rampant desertification and the ensuing frequent droughts, and gradual deforestation were problems of concern to everyone, and the international community needed to look beyond existing institutional arrangements and commit itself to financing sustainable development.

4. In conjunction with its work with development partners to achieve sustainable development objectives, Burkina Faso had instituted a Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty as a high-priority programme of action covering the period from 2004 to 2006. The task of renewing economic and social policy from a sustainable-development perspective was backed up by the democratization and good governance efforts being made daily, and a process of decentralization that enabled local communities to play a greater role in development activities. Despite the difficult political context in the subregion and an international environment characterized by declining cotton prices, a falling dollar and soaring oil costs, Burkina Faso's economy had maintained a growth rate on the order of 5 per cent per annum. Nevertheless, the country had meagre resources available for social programmes, it suffered from extreme poverty and its people were vulnerable to adversity of any kind such as HIV/AIDS or recurring droughts.

5. It was appropriate for the United Nations system to become more involved in all efforts to help vulnerable populations living in the most disadvantaged places on the planet, such as Africa, for people around the world were expecting lasting solutions to be found to the problems of their survival. The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States all merited special attention in that regard. The action of the United Nations system needed to be carried out more effectively through the agencies responsible for operational activities in each country. Particular tribute was due to the Millennium Project team led by Professor Jeffrey Sachs for promoting capacity-building in developing countries with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

6. **Mr. Lwin** (Myanmar) welcomed the establishment of timetables by a number of developed countries for achieving the target of official development assistance representing 0.7 per cent of GNP by 2015, and at least 0.5 per cent of GNP by 2010, and called on those developed countries that had not yet done so to follow suit. Developing countries also had to be given debt relief, including grant-based financing and 100 per cent debt cancellation.

7. Myanmar's National Development Plan and Programmes covered major aspects of the Millennium Development Goals, and as a result the country was making satisfactory progress towards reaching the Goals by 2015. Over the previous four years, Myanmar's economy had posted an average growth rate of 12.5 per cent; 176 dams, 202 major bridges and almost 60,000 kilometres of road had been built; 124 new universities had been opened; the adult literacy rate was 94 per cent; primary school enrolment had reached 98 per cent; and 188 new hospitals had been opened. By 2006, a further 12,000 villages would be provided with access to safe drinking water, bringing the total number of such villages to more than 40,000.

8. Myanmar was making progress in developing its economy primarily using its own resources, as its right to external assistance was being consistently denied by international financial institutions. Were external financial assistance available, however, the country could step up its pace of development. Donor countries and international financial institutions should refrain from using financial assistance as a coercive tool to achieve their demands for political and social reform in a recipient country. Development assistance should not be tied to conditionality and selectivity.

9. The world trading system remained inequitable, and some developed countries continued to practise protectionism. It was not ethical to impose unilateral sanctions against developing countries on the pretext of maintaining labour or human rights standards, ignoring the principle of sovereignty and a country's right of self-determination. Developing countries were hobbled in their development efforts by a lack of access to international markets for commodities, limited inflows of capital and technology and dwindling amounts of official development assistance. Such assistance should be used as a tool to leverage foreign direct investment consistent with the objectives of the recipient country. Important policy decisions affecting developing countries had to be based on the principle of inclusiveness. None should be excluded on the basis of selective political discrimination.

10. Development was a fundamental goal in itself, and an indispensable foundation for a new collective security system. The asymmetric distribution of benefits and risks arising from globalization needed to be redressed, and joint action by all States Members of the United Nations was needed.

11. **Mr. Latheef** (Maldives) said that no country in the world was immune from the devastating effects of extreme weather conditions and climate change. Nature did not mete out such disasters on the basis of how well equipped a country was to deal with the aftermath, or what responsibility a country bore for environmental degradation.

12. In an instant, the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004 had destroyed 62 per cent of the country's GDP, 12 inhabited islands had been reduced to rubble, and social and economic infrastructure in over a quarter of the inhabited islands had been damaged or destroyed. Whereas the country's average rate of growth had been 8 per cent per annum in recent years, a contraction in the range of 3 to 4 per cent was forecast for 2005. Rising oil prices, borrowing to finance reconstruction, and tourism revenue shortfalls were worsening an already critical situation, and IMF was warning of a financial crisis. For the first time in the country's history, it was obliged to appeal for budgetary support from the international community.

13. In regard to environmental sustainability, empty promises had to be replaced by decisive action. Internationally agreed standards of protection and preservation, such as the Kyoto Protocol, had to be put into practice without delay. Developing countries should be assisted in capacity-building to improve their resilience and integrate adaptation goals into their sustainable development strategies. The special needs and vulnerabilities of small island developing States similarly required urgent attention, and to that end meaningful implementation of the Mauritius Strategy was vital.

14. Globalization, with all its potential, continued to deepen the rifts between the developed and developing countries. Actions, not words, were needed to assure the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. Recent initiatives taken by many developed countries to meet the target of providing official development assistance in an amount equal to 0.7 per cent of GNP by 2015 were encouraging.

15. It was hoped that international support for the country's efforts to recover from the tsunami would be forthcoming. Before the tsunami, the Maldives had been well on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and indeed some targets had already been achieved. The Maldives were counting on assistance from international development

partners to regain the momentum lost, and achieve the Goals as planned.

16. The Maldives fully supported the 2005 World Summit Outcome and, as one of the smallest and most vulnerable members of the Organization, recognized that it relied on other members of the international community to assure the success of its development efforts.

17. **Mr. Al-Ghanim** (Kuwait) said that Kuwait attached importance to collective action aimed at achieving the goals of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of the Monterrey Conference, and joined with the international community in the task of harnessing globalization for the benefit of its own people and all of humankind. Kuwait was disappointed that efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals had achieved only mixed results in most regions. Whether it was gaps in infrastructure, funding, expertise, or modern communications and technology that prevented those regions from gaining maximum benefit from the positive aspects of globalization, there could be no doubt that unilateral action had fallen short. What was needed was collective action within the context of a partnership between developed and developing countries in which each party carried out its responsibilities.

18. It was incumbent on the developed States to fulfil their commitment to provide financial, technical, technological and medical assistance at a rate of 0.7 per cent of their GNP for developing States and between 0.15 and 0.20 per cent for the least developed States, in support of national strategies formulated with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, Kuwait appreciated the serious efforts most of the developing countries had made to apply the concepts of good governance, rule of law, fighting corruption, and transparent democratization, as well as the inclusion of women in the public, private, political and economic sectors.

19. Kuwait recognized the role of equitable trade liberalization and investment promotion in hastening the pace of development, and had conducted a review of its economic and trade laws with a view to integration into the global economy. The most notable new legislation had included a law on intellectual property rights, a capital investment law that allowed foreign investors up to 100 per cent ownership, and laws enabling foreign banks to operate in Kuwait. The Government had also established a free trade zone in 1998 to coordinate trade and investment for all States in the region, and had made the necessary efforts to modify regulatory laws and legislations to conform to international agreements and the World Trade Agreement. Kuwait hoped for fair inclusion of the developing countries in the international trade negotiations in Hong Kong, which would be a first step towards the successful completion of the Doha Round.

20. Kuwait had contributed to projects in developing nations bilaterally through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, whose approximately $12 billion had benefited more than 101 States, and through regional and international bodies or funds such as the OPEC Fund and the African Development Bank. Kuwait's average assistance rate of 1.3 of its gross national income between 1990 and 2003 had exceeded the target percentage. Kuwait applauded the Group of Eight (G-8) and European Union initiatives to cancel the debts of the poorest and heavily indebted countries and hoped that the debts of all developing countries could be rescheduled and alleviated in accordance with the Paris Club's Evian approach.

21. The State of Kuwait was using the latest environmental technology for producing, refining and burning fuel and helping to stabilize oil markets whose recent rise, due to the global economic recovery that had caused a sharp rise in commodity prices, had as negative an effect on the producer as the consumer. The OPEC States were working to rectify that situation through greater investment in production and greater cooperation with other oil-producing parties. The unusual disruption in the oil markets was exacerbated by recent natural disasters in oil-producing regions and lack of investment in refineries. Kuwait was seeking solutions through investment in refineries and partnerships in Asia and America to meet the future needs of the global market.

22. **Mr. Chidumo** (Mozambique) said the fact that the Summit Outcome had failed to meet the expectations of developing countries should not affect the determination of States to work together for the common good. He welcomed the European Union's decision to set a timetable for meeting the target of devoting 0.7 per cent of GNI to ODA by 2015, urging other countries to emulate that example. After commending the commitments made by donors to increase aid by around $130 billion a year by 2010, including doubling the amount of aid to sub-Saharan

Africa over the same period, he urged the international community to explore innovative sources of financing. He also stressed the importance of initiatives to enhance the quality of aid, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. His country, one of the most aid-dependent countries in Africa, put a high premium on improving aid effectiveness.

23. He looked forward to the day when the Group of Eight decision to cancel the debt of 18 heavily indebted poor countries, including his own, would be enforced, releasing resources for poverty alleviation. Mozambique, which was committed to taking responsibility for its own development, believed that capacity-building and technical assistance from abroad would be crucial in achieving that goal. In that regard, he was encouraged by the resolve of the 2005 Summit to strengthen cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and provide coherent support for programmes drawn up by African leaders.

24. He called for stronger commitment by and help from the international community in combating pandemic diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, which jeopardized development efforts in developing countries, particularly in Africa. With regard to trade, the international community must renew its commitment to ensuring that the upcoming Hong Kong Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) achieved the development goals contained in the Doha Declaration. Africa's problems in that area, including structural constraints such as dependency on a limited number of export commodities and limited access for farmers to credit, needed to be urgently addressed in a holistic manner. Agriculture was a strategic sector in Africa, with 70 per cent of its population depending on it for their income. Addressing that issue was vital for the eradication of poverty. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was encouraged to play a catalytic role to ensure that trade negotiations reflected the concerns of the least developed countries.

25. **Mr. Bharati** (Nepal) welcomed the setting of a timetable by the European Union for reaching the target of 0.7 per cent of GNI as ODA to developing countries by 2015 and its commitment to double aid by 2010 to over $80 billion and urged other developed countries to do likewise. While he welcomed the G-8 proposal to cancel the debt of 18 heavily indebted poor countries, he believed that initiative should be extended to all least developed countries, especially those racked by conflict, if world leaders were really serious about making poverty history. Indeed, owing to rampant terrorism, development in his country had been greatly constrained in recent years. Determined to defeat that scourge, his Government had been implementing targeted programmes of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

26. The current tenth national development plan had focused on poverty eradication, social inclusion, sustained economic growth and promotion of sustainable development. The Government had also initiated a programme focusing, inter alia, on improving service delivery in remote rural areas. Nepal had been continuing its economic reforms in order to encourage the private sector to play a leadership role in economic development. It had been pursuing trade liberalization and putting in place trade laws consistent with WTO provisions. For trade to become a catalyst for development, however, the least developed and landlocked countries needed increased trading opportunities with unhindered market access. In that regard, his delegation advocated full implementation of the Almaty Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action. Furthermore, implementation of the special and differential provisions of WTO agreements, along with international commitments and consensus, including the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, would help to ensure full participation by landlocked and least developed countries in the multilateral trading system.

27. **Ms. Holguín** (Colombia) said that, like other middle-income countries, Colombia had incorporated the major development goals of recent summits and conferences into its policies. Free access to international markets in order to export products under fair conditions was important, as was access to sources of international financing to consolidate sustainable development. Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals should provide the basis for consolidating macroeconomic structures to strengthen employment and education policies to reinforce social and productive investments and the competitiveness of developing countries. The eradication of extreme poverty could not be achieved through ODA alone.

28. While believing in North-South cooperation, Colombia considered that developing countries should enhance South-South cooperation. The Doha Declaration emphasized the importance of

strengthening South-South trade initiatives, such as the Global System of Trade Preferences Among Developing Countries. Cooperation in the financial, scientific and technical spheres should also be reinforced in order to build national capacity that would permit economic diversification and sustainable resource management.

29. Colombia recognized the link between international migration and development. It was important to minimize the negative social, political and economic impact of migratory processes, while acknowledging their positive contributions. The General Assembly was organizing a high-level dialogue on international migration in 2006; it would provide the opportunity for countries of origin, transit and destination to reach agreement on managing migration, while respecting the dignity and human rights of migrants and their families.

30. In the fight against corruption, Colombia considered it important to promote the principle of shared international responsibility and insisted that banking secrecy should be lifted, and the funds originating from corruption seized and returned in order to attack the financial proceeds of such crimes directly. With regard to the environment, the protection of biological diversity, particularly genetic resources, was particularly relevant to Colombia, and a fair and equitable distribution of the benefits deriving from their use should be ensured. Also, appropriate housing and potable water policies were essential for poverty eradication and environmental protection.

31. Colombia had always supported a multilateral solution to climate change. International efforts should be concentrated on developing a comprehensive global regime, based on the principle of joint but differentiated responsibilities. It was necessary to work towards preventing natural disasters. Local and regional experiences were a valuable resource for creating sustainable strategies. The Andean Community had developed a strategy for the prevention of disasters and, while international cooperation was required in order fully to implement it, the Community could share its experiences with other countries and regions. Lastly, Colombia considered that the Economic and Social Council should become a major development forum.

32. **Mr. Talbot** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Second Committee had the heavy responsibility of articulating the collective obligations in economic and financial matters and ensuring their practical realization. The Caribbean nations faced the simultaneous challenge of attaining fuller integration into the global economy while achieving sustainable growth and development to ensure the welfare and prosperity of their people. Thus, the sustained cooperation and support of the international community remained essential; in fact, it was especially critical at a time when a widely expanded range of threats, natural and man-made, magnified the vulnerabilities of the region.

33. Member States of CARICOM had entered into diverse bilateral, regional and multilateral partnerships to foster overall development and were committed to the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. Trade was the preferred route to guarantee the development of the region; a more coherent and supportive international trading and financial system would complement national and regional efforts.

34. The recent decision of the Bretton Woods institutions to support the initiative to cancel the debt of heavily indebted poor countries was laudable. Nevertheless, further action was required to address debt sustainability issues for lower middle-income countries and the adverse impact of unilateral changes in trade arrangements that could devastate the economies of many countries.

35. During the recent High-level Plenary Meeting, leaders had referred to the need for a more coordinated and systematic approach to development, particularly by the United Nations bodies and agencies. A holistic approach to the use of available and potential resources to ensure sustained equitable global development should be articulated, and the Economic and Social Council should be strengthened to allow it to play a central role in the promotion of international economic and social cooperation. All stakeholders recognized that additional resources were needed to spur development; however, all the possible consequences of new measures envisaged to provide such resources should be analysed prior to implementation.

36. Given their dependence on the natural environment for their subsistence, environmental protection issues were of special relevance to the countries of the Caribbean Community. Despite efforts to mitigate natural disasters, response was constrained

by limited capacity and resources. CARICOM therefore called for early establishment of the Caribbean regional node of the global early warning system and stressed the need to develop mechanisms to support post-disaster recovery.

37. Increased collaboration was needed in all areas, including such disparate sectors as technology transfer and international crime. Lastly, the eradication of hunger and poverty remained central to the achievement of the agreed development goals. The elaboration of a matrix to monitor more closely the responsibilities and progress in relation to the goals was a welcome idea.

38. **Mr. Chng** (Singapore) said that countries could not afford to be isolationist; their success would depend on how well they were able to connect themselves to international networks. During the Cold War, there had been a clear strategic imperative for rich countries to help the poorer countries in their sphere of influence, so as to build alliances. Today, the rich were asked to help the poor because they had a moral obligation. But development was driven by hard strategic interests.

39. The wide gap between the marginalized and those who were connected was continuing to grow. Such inequality was of concern, not only for humanitarian reasons, but because poverty was more likely to foster instability, war and terrorism and, in an integrated world, upheaval and unrest in one country had a ripple effect on the rest of the international community.

40. Since 2000, world leaders had agreed on several blueprints for development. However, to attain the goals established, it was necessary to build a real consensus that development was an international strategic imperative with a direct impact on the stability of the world. States could no longer collide or cooperate at the boundaries of their sovereignties; a shared responsibility for global governance was required. However, at the national level, States had to develop and define their own models of governance, within their own unique context and circumstances. Their approach should be based on a sound analysis of what was practical, not doctrinal, and on a logical rather than a philosophical framework. Despite globalization, the traditional role of the nation-State has increased rather than diminished in importance. Each country had the primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, and the role of national policies and development strategies could not be overemphasized. Consequently, although developed countries should help developing countries, the latter must adopt a realistic and pragmatic approach and play their part in furthering development, which could require difficult domestic changes and adjustments. They should also play an active role in helping each other; South-South trade had become a major driving force in raising the share in world trade of all developing countries. Protectionism was the swiftest road to poverty, whereas greater integration in global trade offered the best prospect for a sustained rise in living standards and economic development in the developing regions.

41. Developed countries should understand that it was in their collective self-interest to work in close partnership with developing countries to help the latter succeed. Official development assistance was important, but the developed countries should also dismantle farming subsidies that made it impossible for farmers in poor developing countries to compete. The Doha Round of trade negotiations provided an important opportunity to resolve such inequalities.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.